

Hamilton Field, Group Headquarters Type A
(Facility No. 433)
Hangar Avenue between 5th and 6th Streets
Novato
Marin County
California

HABS No. CA-2398-V

HABS
CAL
21-NOVA,
IV-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAMILTON FIELD
Group Headquarters Type A
(Facility No. 433)

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Location: Hamilton Army Air Field
Novato, Marin County, California
Group Headquarters Type A
Facility No. 433 (Hangar Avenue between 5th and 6th Streets)

U.S.G.S.: Novato, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1954 (revised 1980)
Petaluma Point, CA. Quadrangle (7.5' series), 1959 (revised 1980)
UTM Coordinates: Zone 10; A: 542100/4213620; B: 544720/4212220;
C: 542760/4210650; D: 541040/4212600

Significance:

Facility No. 433 served as an administrative headquarters for air groups and is considered significant for its association with Air Force history in northern California, and with World War II actions in the Pacific Theater.

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) for a comprehensive Statement of Significance and individual report HABS No. CA-2398-A for a condensed Statement of Significance.

Description:

The Group Headquarters building consists of four 25- by 108-foot wings intersected by three 25- by 75-foot connecting wings. The long, basically E-shaped, building has low-pitched gable roofs covered with composition shingles; each wing has louvered vents in the gable ends. Numerous metal ventilators are located on the ridge line. Siding is horizontal board clad with asbestos shingles. Primary entrances to each of the four main wings are double or single solid core wood doors with four lights over three horizontal recessed panels; each with a small wood canopy. Lock sets are standard metal with round knobs and half-mortised hinges. Doors have metal panic bars in the interior.

Windows are primarily located on the connecting wings and are six-light wood sash awning windows with a chain and four-over-four-light and six-over-six-light wood sash double hung. A few single-light fixed windows are present as well.

The interior flooring is tongue and groove wood covered with eight-inch-square vinyl asbestos tiles in an alternating green and grey pattern. Walls are gypsum board or temporary wood partitions. There are three offices with wood panelling for wainscoting. Each is located at the end of a main wing nearest Hangar Avenue. Originally the ceilings were open with exposed roof trusses, six-inches square, supported by wood knee braces and exposed

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ductwork. Some of the wings now have suspended acoustical tile ceilings, covering up the truss system and ductwork.

A few original "schoolhouse" type fixtures with milk glass bulbs remain in the halls. Most of the lights are two-tube fluorescent fixtures, eight feet long, mounted in the ceiling. Some of these are open industrial types with metal hoods and others have four-panel diffused plastic covers and are mounted flush with the ceiling.

Three bathrooms are present in the front of each main wing, on the southwest side of the building. Men's facilities typically contain a wall- or floor-mounted flush valve urinal, one or two toilets separated by wooden partitions, and a wall-mounted hand sink. All sanitary equipment is made by Standard Company. There is only one room designated as a women's restroom and it has one flush valve toilet and a hand sink, both installed in the 1970s. Two drinking fountains are located in the building; a SUNROC porcelain-topped metal unit and a metal Cordley fountain made by Westinghouse.

Landscaping includes camphor trees lining the streets and two large conifers accenting the wings, as well as some foundation shrubs.

Historical Context:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

By the end of World War II the buildings had been connected along the southwest ends with three connecting wings, probably to meet demands of managing the many transient air groups who passed through Hamilton on their way overseas. It remained in use as an administrative center for the wings and, in the 1970s, as a headquarters for Civil Air Patrol, until the base closed in 1974. At that time it reverted to the General Services Administration. It is currently part of an excess property sale.

Sources:

See narrative for Hamilton Field (HABS No. CA-2398) and Section B in report HABS No. CA-2398-F.

See the project Field Record, roll 34, exposures 9-10; roll 35, exposures 5-6; roll 36, exposures 9-12; roll 37, exposures 3-12; and roll 38, exposures 1-4.

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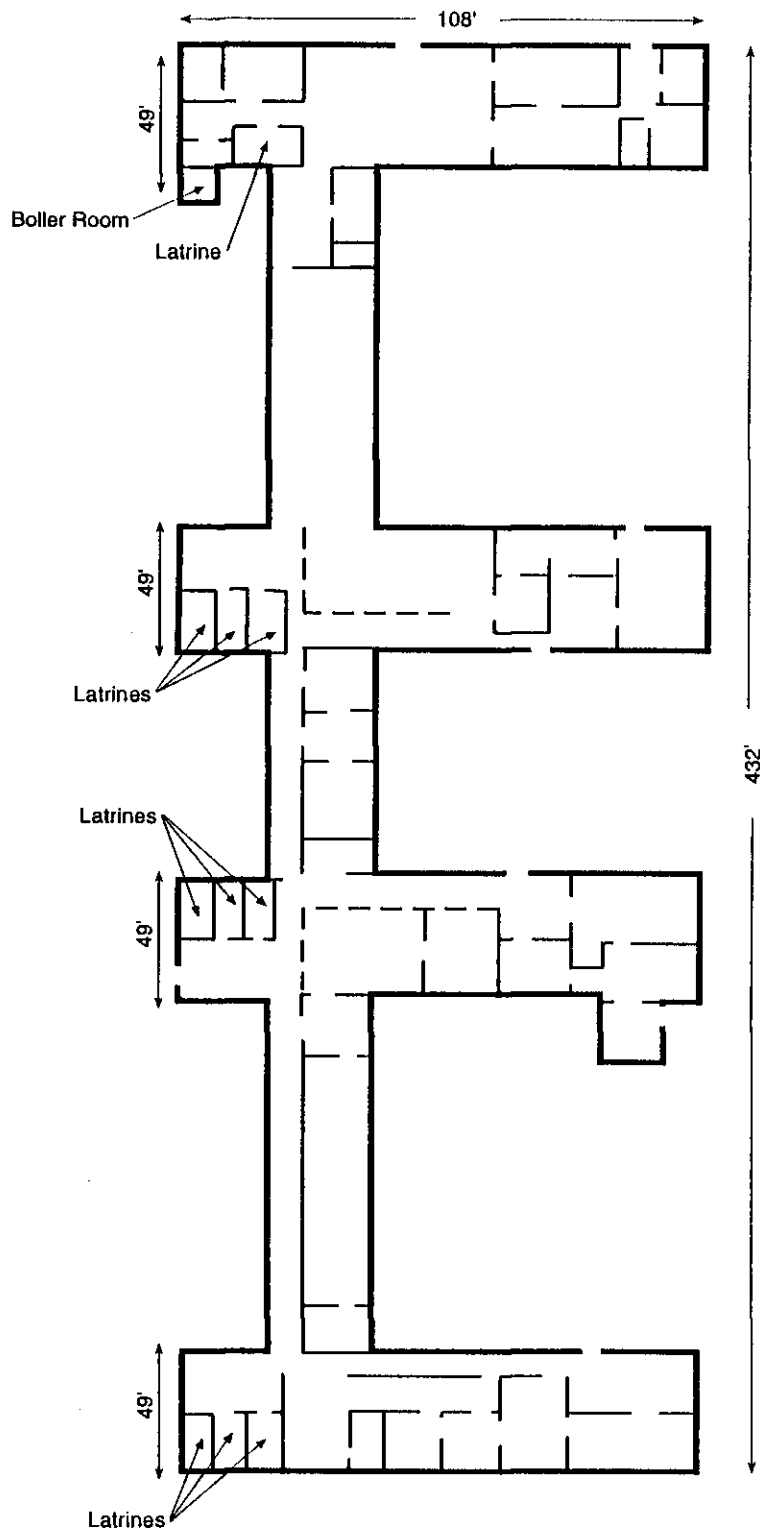
The line drawn sketches were drafted on site in 1994 by Keith Syda, scanned into a computer and drawn by Christopher MacDonald in 1995, and corrected and finalized by Claire Warshaw in 1996 (all PAR Environmental Services, Inc. staff).

Project Information:

Hamilton Army Air Field is owned by various federal entities including the Department of the Navy, Department of the Army, United States Coast Guard, and General Services Administration (GSA). The Army/GSA parcels are being excessed and sold to private developers. The Navy property is included in Base Closure and Realignment actions.

As part of the Army's undertaking, it has been determined in consultation with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) that the excess sale will have an affect on properties at the air field, and that these properties are components of a district that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Based on consultation with the OHP and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was entered into by the interested parties in March 1994. The agreement stipulated that prior to excess sale the Army must contact the HABS/HAER division at the Western Regional Office of the National Park Service, San Francisco, California, to determine the appropriate level and kind of recordation for the subject properties. The MOA further stipulated that copies of the documentation be made available to the OHP and appropriate local archives designated by the OHP. This recordation has been prepared in order to meet those stipulations.

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Date prepared: July 1995
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Affiliation: Mesa Technical, Berkeley, California
Date of photographs: May 1993



NOTE: Unlabeled rooms used as
offices or classrooms